


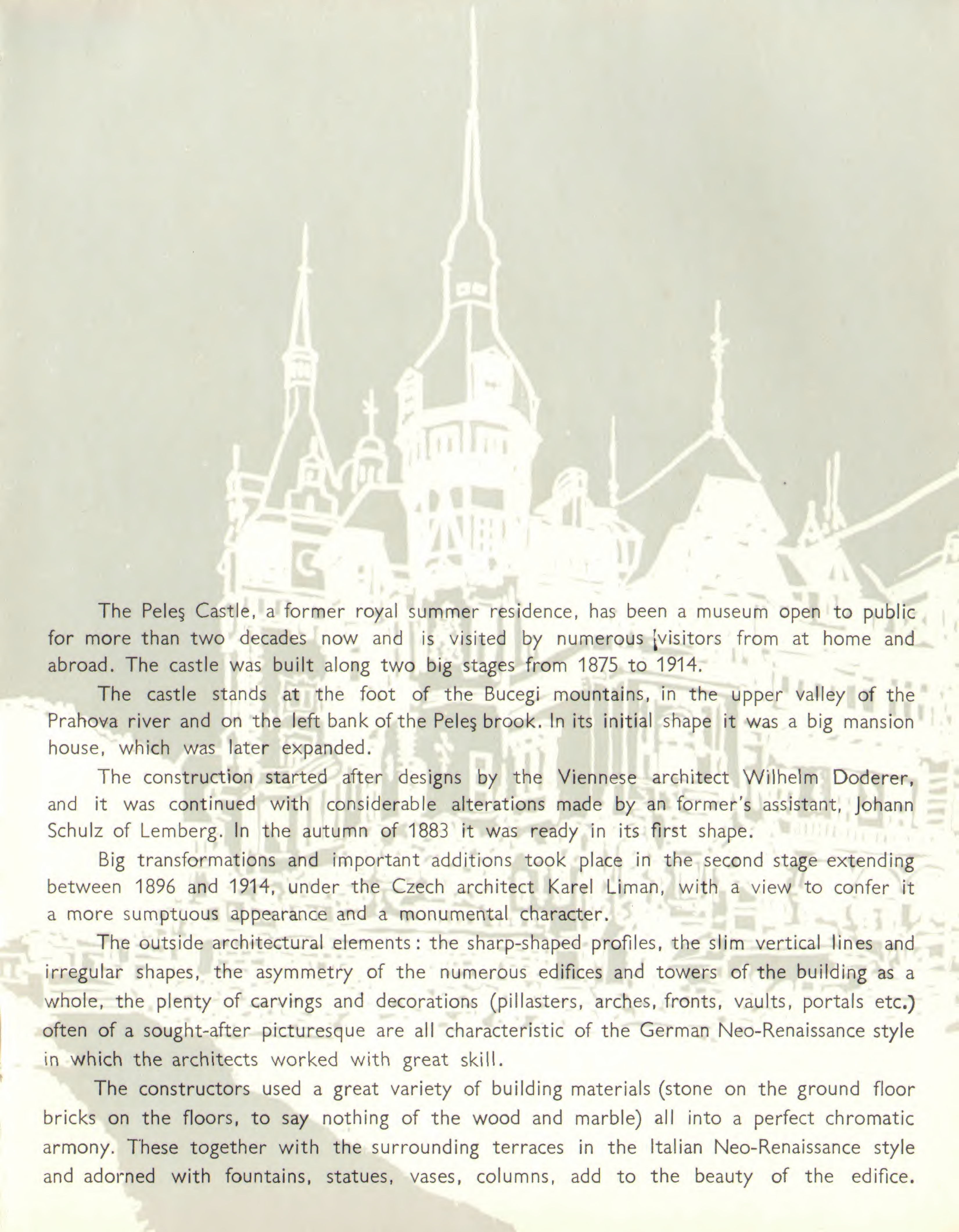


PELLEŠ



THE PELEŞ MUSEUM

SINAIA—ROMANIA
1969



The Peleş Castle, a former royal summer residence, has been a museum open to public for more than two decades now and is visited by numerous visitors from at home and abroad. The castle was built along two big stages from 1875 to 1914.

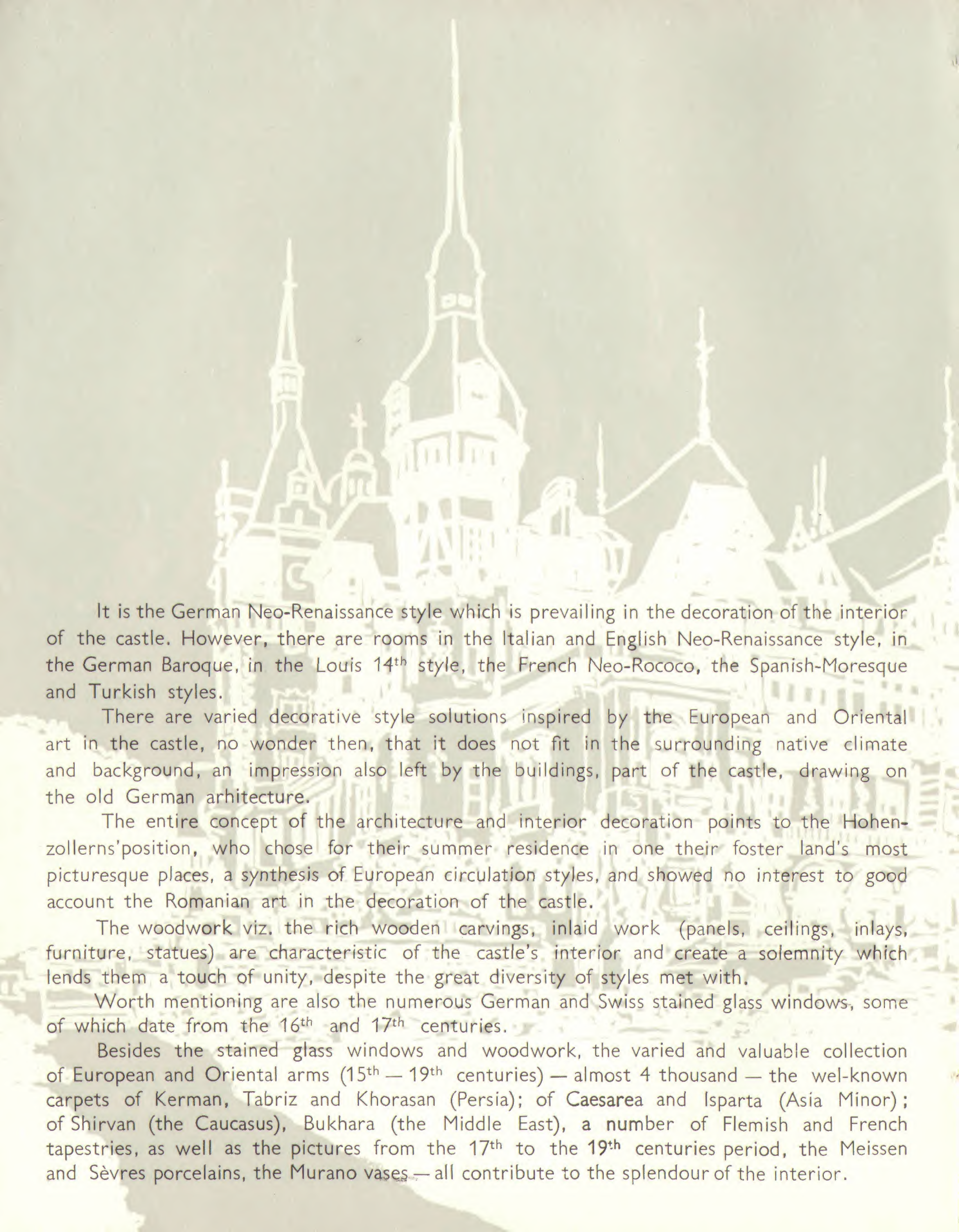
The castle stands at the foot of the Bucegi mountains, in the upper valley of the Prahova river and on the left bank of the Peleş brook. In its initial shape it was a big mansion house, which was later expanded.

The construction started after designs by the Viennese architect Wilhelm Doderer, and it was continued with considerable alterations made by an former's assistant, Johann Schulz of Lemberg. In the autumn of 1883 it was ready in its first shape.

Big transformations and important additions took place in the second stage extending between 1896 and 1914, under the Czech architect Karel Liman, with a view to confer it a more sumptuous appearance and a monumental character.

The outside architectural elements: the sharp-shaped profiles, the slim vertical lines and irregular shapes, the asymmetry of the numerous edifices and towers of the building as a whole, the plenty of carvings and decorations (pillasters, arches, fronts, vaults, portals etc.) often of a sought-after picturesque are all characteristic of the German Neo-Renaissance style in which the architects worked with great skill.

The constructors used a great variety of building materials (stone on the ground floor bricks on the floors, to say nothing of the wood and marble) all into a perfect chromatic armony. These together with the surrounding terraces in the Italian Neo-Renaissance style and adorned with fountains, statues, vases, columns, add to the beauty of the edifice.



It is the German Neo-Renaissance style which is prevailing in the decoration of the interior of the castle. However, there are rooms in the Italian and English Neo-Renaissance style, in the German Baroque, in the Louis 14th style, the French Neo-Rococo, the Spanish-Moresque and Turkish styles.

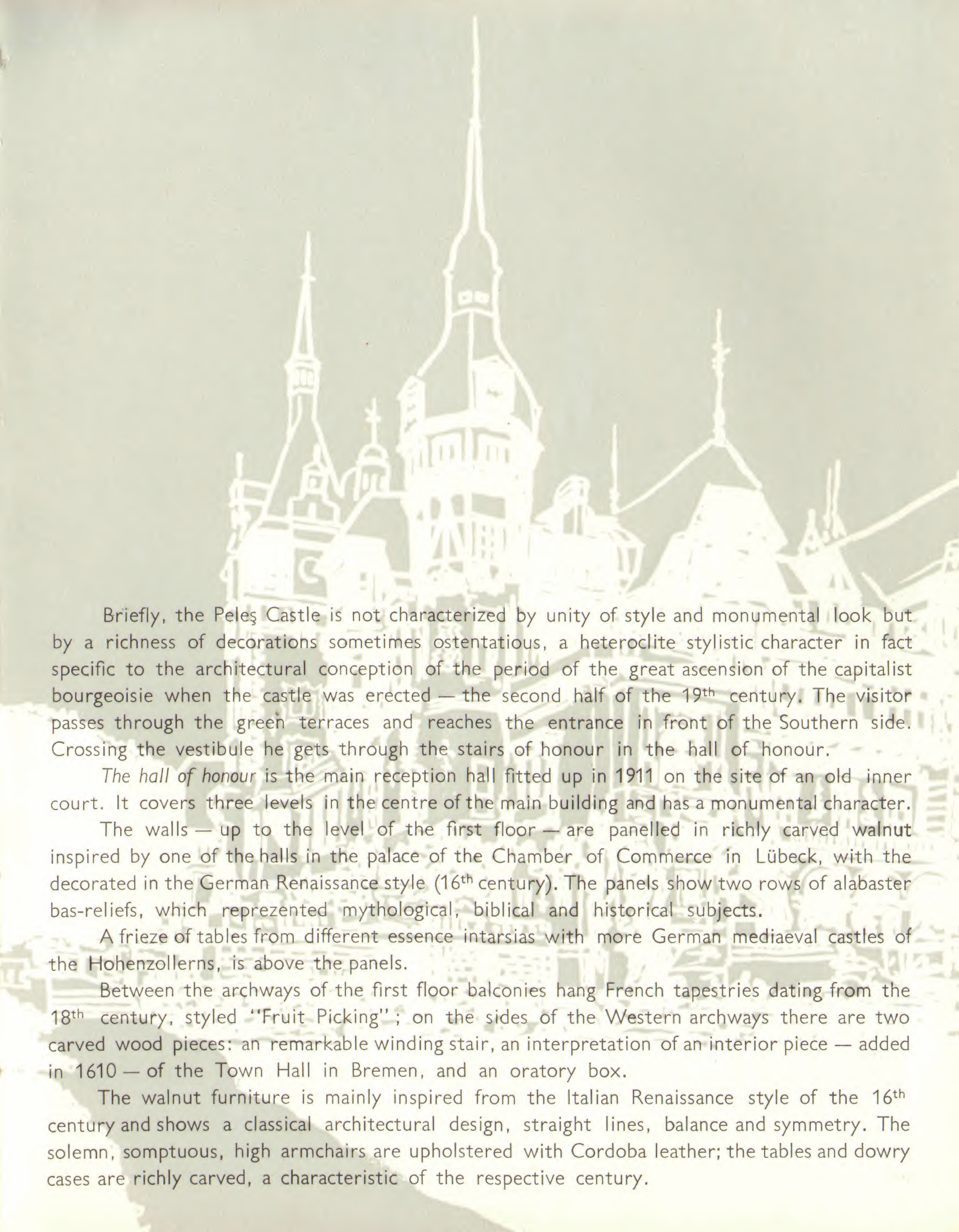
There are varied decorative style solutions inspired by the European and Oriental art in the castle, no wonder then, that it does not fit in the surrounding native climate and background, an impression also left by the buildings, part of the castle, drawing on the old German architecture.

The entire concept of the architecture and interior decoration points to the Hohenzollerns' position, who chose for their summer residence in one their foster land's most picturesque places, a synthesis of European circulation styles, and showed no interest to good account the Romanian art in the decoration of the castle.

The woodwork viz. the rich wooden carvings, inlaid work (panels, ceilings, inlays, furniture, statues) are characteristic of the castle's interior and create a solemnity which lends them a touch of unity, despite the great diversity of styles met with.

Worth mentioning are also the numerous German and Swiss stained glass windows, some of which date from the 16th and 17th centuries.

Besides the stained glass windows and woodwork, the varied and valuable collection of European and Oriental arms (15th — 19th centuries) — almost 4 thousand — the well-known carpets of Kerman, Tabriz and Khorasan (Persia); of Caesarea and Isparta (Asia Minor); of Shirvan (the Caucasus), Bukhara (the Middle East), a number of Flemish and French tapestries, as well as the pictures from the 17th to the 19th centuries period, the Meissen and Sèvres porcelains, the Murano vases — all contribute to the splendour of the interior.



Briefly, the Peleş Castle is not characterized by unity of style and monumental look but by a richness of decorations sometimes ostentatious, a heteroclitic stylistic character in fact specific to the architectural conception of the period of the great ascension of the capitalist bourgeoisie when the castle was erected — the second half of the 19th century. The visitor passes through the green terraces and reaches the entrance in front of the Southern side. Crossing the vestibule he gets through the stairs of honour in the hall of honour.

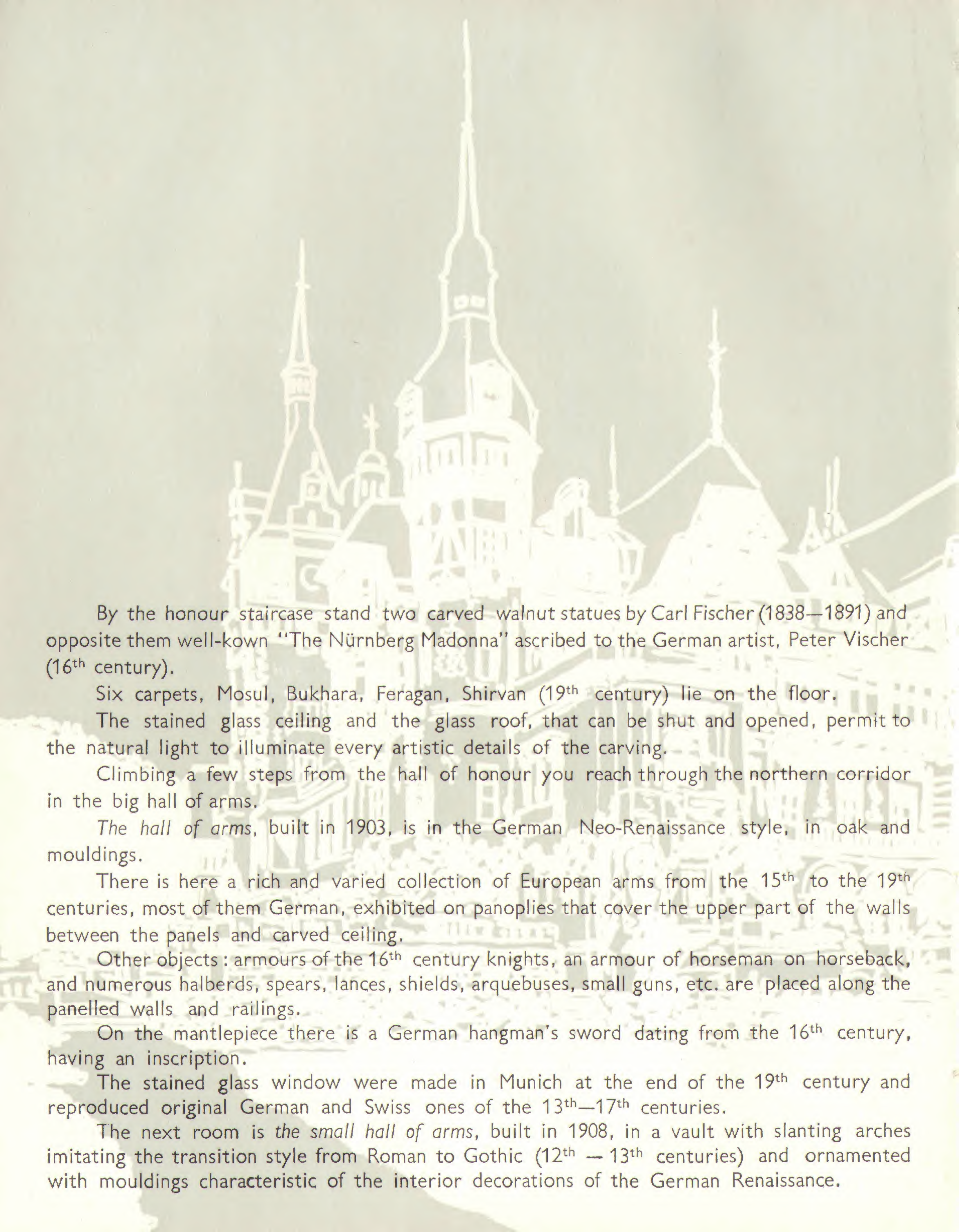
The hall of honour is the main reception hall fitted up in 1911 on the site of an old inner court. It covers three levels in the centre of the main building and has a monumental character.

The walls — up to the level of the first floor — are panelled in richly carved walnut inspired by one of the halls in the palace of the Chamber of Commerce in Lübeck, with the decoration in the German Renaissance style (16th century). The panels show two rows of alabaster bas-reliefs, which represented mythological, biblical and historical subjects.

A frieze of tables from different essence intarsias with more German mediaeval castles of the Hohenzollerns, is above the panels.

Between the archways of the first floor balconies hang French tapestries dating from the 18th century, styled "Fruit Picking"; on the sides of the Western archways there are two carved wood pieces: an remarkable winding stair, an interpretation of an interior piece — added in 1610 — of the Town Hall in Bremen, and an oratory box.

The walnut furniture is mainly inspired from the Italian Renaissance style of the 16th century and shows a classical architectural design, straight lines, balance and symmetry. The solemn, sumptuous, high armchairs are upholstered with Cordoba leather; the tables and dowry cases are richly carved, a characteristic of the respective century.



By the honour staircase stand two carved walnut statues by Carl Fischer (1838—1891) and opposite them well-known "The Nürnberg Madonna" ascribed to the German artist, Peter Vischer (16th century).

Six carpets, Mosul, Bukhara, Feragan, Shirvan (19th century) lie on the floor.

The stained glass ceiling and the glass roof, that can be shut and opened, permit to the natural light to illuminate every artistic details of the carving.

Climbing a few steps from the hall of honour you reach through the northern corridor in the big hall of arms.

The hall of arms, built in 1903, is in the German Neo-Renaissance style, in oak and mouldings.

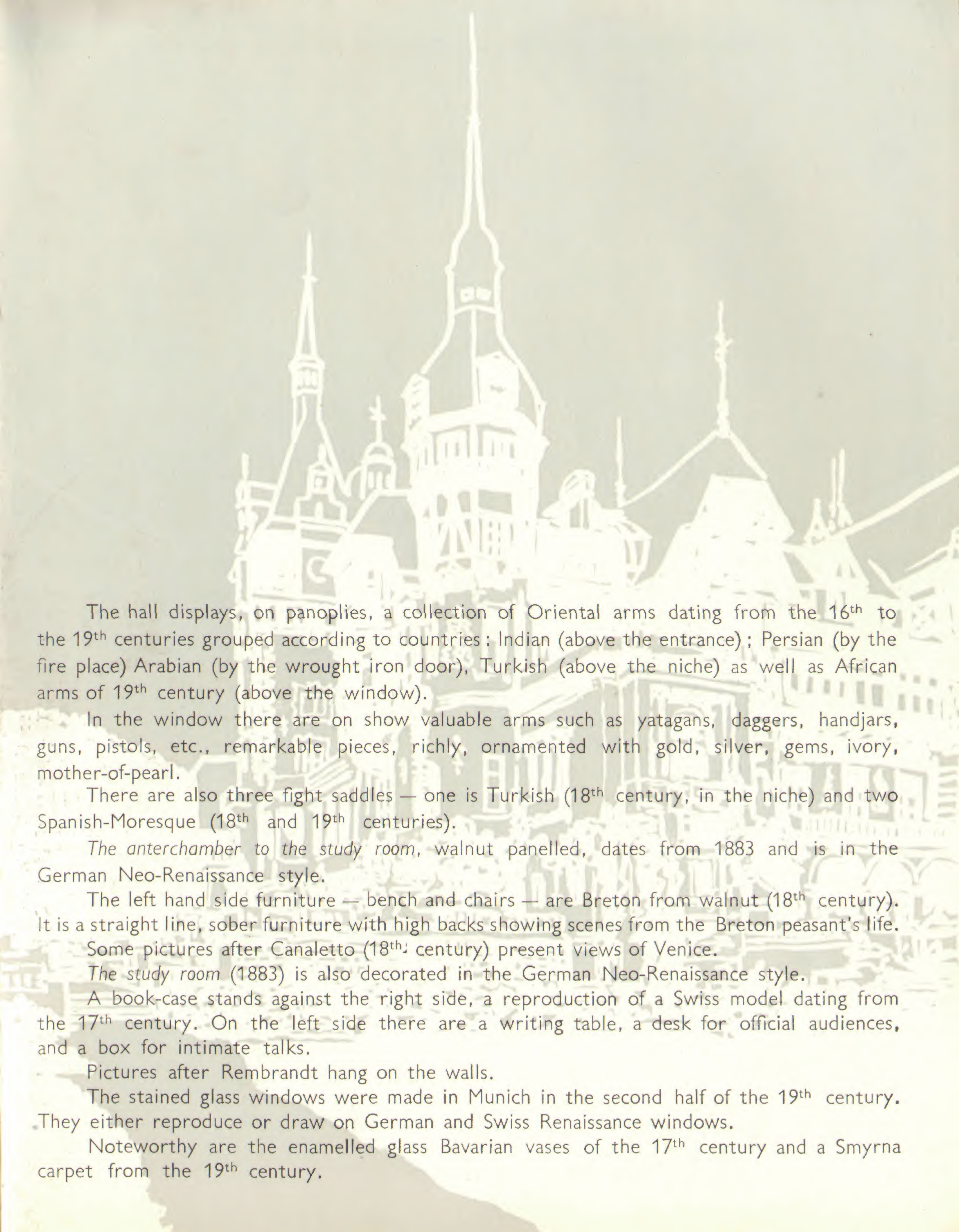
There is here a rich and varied collection of European arms from the 15th to the 19th centuries, most of them German, exhibited on panoplies that cover the upper part of the walls between the panels and carved ceiling.

Other objects: armours of the 16th century knights, an armour of horseman on horseback, and numerous halberds, spears, lances, shields, arquebuses, small guns, etc. are placed along the panelled walls and railings.

On the mantelpiece there is a German hangman's sword dating from the 16th century, having an inscription.

The stained glass window were made in Munich at the end of the 19th century and reproduced original German and Swiss ones of the 13th—17th centuries.

The next room is *the small hall of arms*, built in 1908, in a vault with slanting arches imitating the transition style from Roman to Gothic (12th — 13th centuries) and ornamented with mouldings characteristic of the interior decorations of the German Renaissance.



The hall displays, on panoplies, a collection of Oriental arms dating from the 16th to the 19th centuries grouped according to countries: Indian (above the entrance); Persian (by the fire place) Arabian (by the wrought iron door), Turkish (above the niche) as well as African arms of 19th century (above the window).

In the window there are on show valuable arms such as yatagans, daggers, handjars, guns, pistols, etc., remarkable pieces, richly, ornamented with gold, silver, gems, ivory, mother-of-pearl.

There are also three fight saddles — one is Turkish (18th century, in the niche) and two Spanish-Moresque (18th and 19th centuries).

The antechamber to the study room, walnut panelled, dates from 1883 and is in the German Neo-Renaissance style.

The left hand side furniture — bench and chairs — are Breton from walnut (18th century). It is a straight line, sober furniture with high backs showing scenes from the Breton peasant's life.

Some pictures after Canaletto (18th century) present views of Venice.

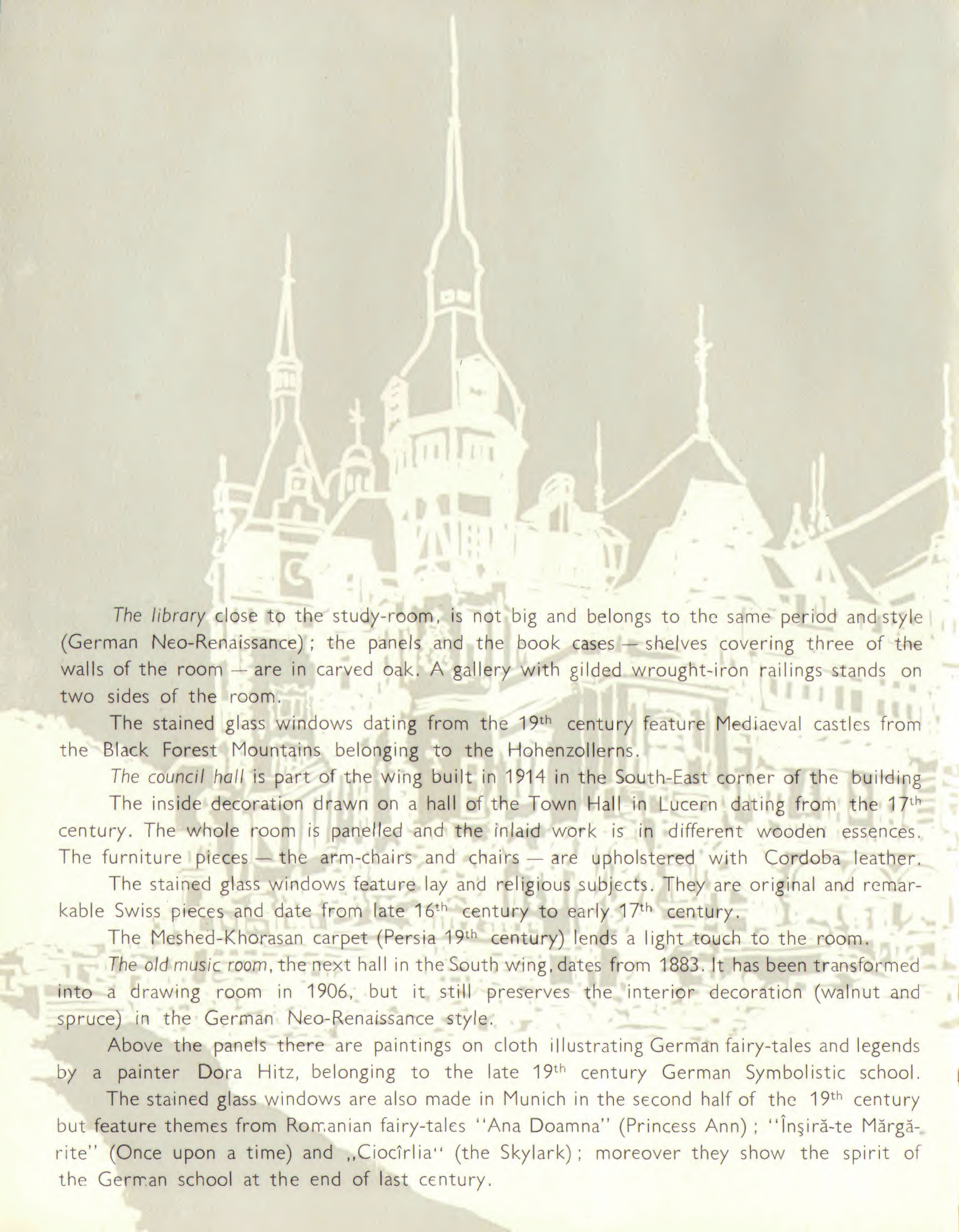
The study room (1883) is also decorated in the German Neo-Renaissance style.

A book-case stands against the right side, a reproduction of a Swiss model dating from the 17th century. On the left side there are a writing table, a desk for official audiences, and a box for intimate talks.

Pictures after Rembrandt hang on the walls.

The stained glass windows were made in Munich in the second half of the 19th century. They either reproduce or draw on German and Swiss Renaissance windows.

Noteworthy are the enamelled glass Bavarian vases of the 17th century and a Smyrna carpet from the 19th century.



The library close to the study-room, is not big and belongs to the same period and style (German Neo-Renaissance); the panels and the book cases — shelves covering three of the walls of the room — are in carved oak. A gallery with gilded wrought-iron railings stands on two sides of the room.

The stained glass windows dating from the 19th century feature Mediaeval castles from the Black Forest Mountains belonging to the Hohenzollerns.

The council hall is part of the wing built in 1914 in the South-East corner of the building. The inside decoration drawn on a hall of the Town Hall in Lucern dating from the 17th century. The whole room is panelled and the inlaid work is in different wooden essences. The furniture pieces — the arm-chairs and chairs — are upholstered with Cordoba leather.


The stained glass windows feature lay and religious subjects. They are original and remarkable Swiss pieces and date from late 16th century to early 17th century.

The Meshed-Khorasan carpet (Persia 19th century) lends a light touch to the room.

The old music room, the next hall in the South wing, dates from 1883. It has been transformed into a drawing room in 1906, but it still preserves the interior decoration (walnut and spruce) in the German Neo-Renaissance style.

Above the panels there are paintings on cloth illustrating German fairy-tales and legends by a painter Dora Hitz, belonging to the late 19th century German Symbolistic school.

The stained glass windows are also made in Munich in the second half of the 19th century but feature themes from Romanian fairy-tales "Ana Doamna" (Princess Ann); "Înșiră-te Mărgărite" (Once upon a time) and „Ciocîrlia" (the Skylark); moreover they show the spirit of the German school at the end of last century.



From the old music room there still remained a stand and an electric musical player, the orchestron, an invention of 1849.

The Indian furniture is made from teak wood with traditional motifs in the 19th century. Two Japanese vases, gilded faience of Satsuma (19th century), stand in front of the window and on their right there is a Chinese brass vase (18th century) with handles in shape of dragons.

The Tabriz carpet (19th century) shows red hues and matches the ensemble of the room.

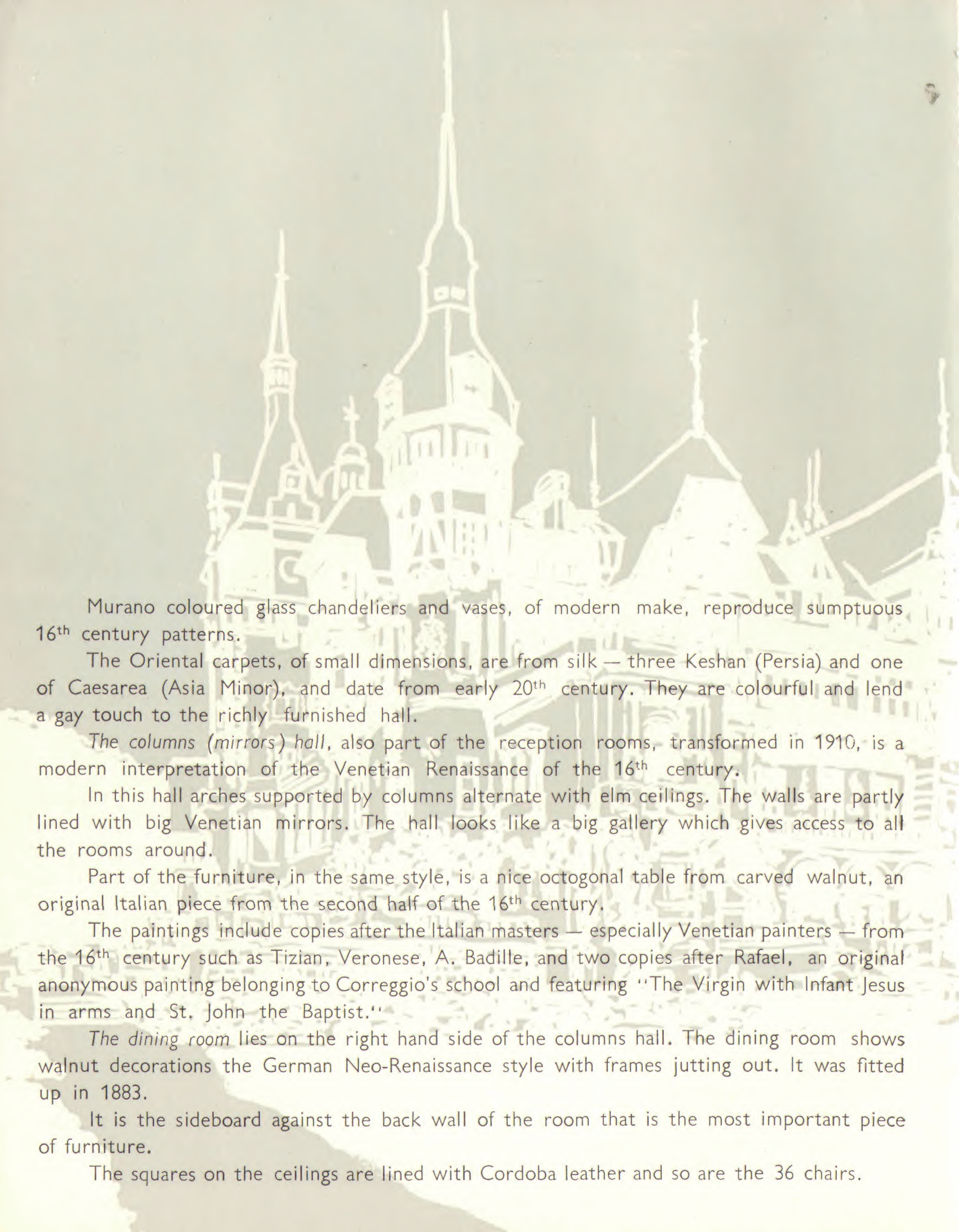
Part of the reception rooms on the South wing is also *the Florentine hall* fitted up in 1910.

It is an inlaid work panelled room with the ceiling, rich in carvings and gold plating, having in the centre a painting after Giorgio Vasari; the marble frames of the doors and fire place — the latter ornamented with small scale bronze Florentine sculptures after Michael Angelo — and part of the furniture, are all in the Italian Neo-Renaissance style proper to the whole interior decoration of the hall.

The proportioned sizes of the room, the symmetry and brilliancy of the ornaments, the balanced horizontal and vertical lines, the arches of the frontispiece evidence the elegance of the Florentine style.

Alongside the Renaissance furniture (tables, decorative thrones, benches, chairs) there are two ebony cabinets with coloured marble inlays and a big table with marble marquetry characterized by plenty of decorative elements and a play of curved lines specific to the Italian Baroque (17th century).

The pictures in the Florentine hall are copies after Peter Paul Rubens except one which represents Isabelle of Austria and belongs to an anonymous Flemish painter of the 17th century.



Murano coloured glass chandeliers and vases, of modern make, reproduce sumptuous 16th century patterns.

The Oriental carpets, of small dimensions, are from silk — three Keshan (Persia) and one of Caesarea (Asia Minor), and date from early 20th century. They are colourful and lend a gay touch to the richly furnished hall.

The columns (mirrors) hall, also part of the reception rooms, transformed in 1910, is a modern interpretation of the Venetian Renaissance of the 16th century.

In this hall arches supported by columns alternate with elm ceilings. The walls are partly lined with big Venetian mirrors. The hall looks like a big gallery which gives access to all the rooms around.

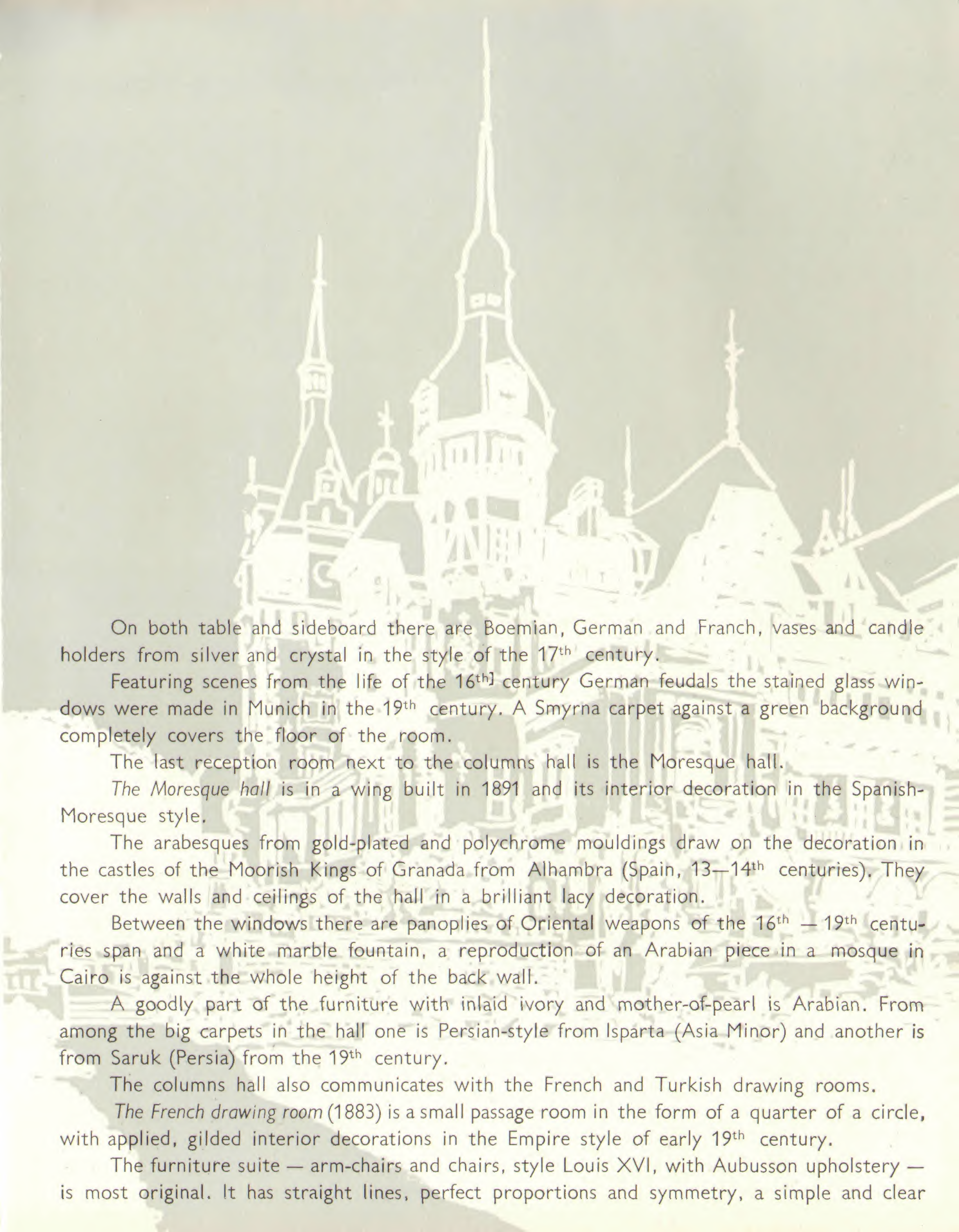
Part of the furniture, in the same style, is a nice octagonal table from carved walnut, an original Italian piece from the second half of the 16th century.

The paintings include copies after the Italian masters — especially Venetian painters — from the 16th century such as Tizian, Veronese, A. Badille, and two copies after Rafael, an original anonymous painting belonging to Correggio's school and featuring "The Virgin with Infant Jesus in arms and St. John the Baptist."

The dining room lies on the right hand side of the columns hall. The dining room shows walnut decorations the German Neo-Renaissance style with frames jutting out. It was fitted up in 1883.

It is the sideboard against the back wall of the room that is the most important piece of furniture.

The squares on the ceilings are lined with Cordoba leather and so are the 36 chairs.



On both table and sideboard there are Boemian, German and Franch, vases and candle holders from silver and crystal in the style of the 17th century.

Featuring scenes from the life of the 16th century German feudals the stained glass windows were made in Munich in the 19th century. A Smyrna carpet against a green background completely covers the floor of the room.

The last reception room next to the columns hall is the Moresque hall.

The Moresque hall is in a wing built in 1891 and its interior decoration in the Spanish-Moresque style.

The arabesques from gold-plated and polychrome mouldings draw on the decoration in the castles of the Moorish Kings of Granada from Alhambra (Spain, 13—14th centuries). They cover the walls and ceilings of the hall in a brilliant lacy decoration.

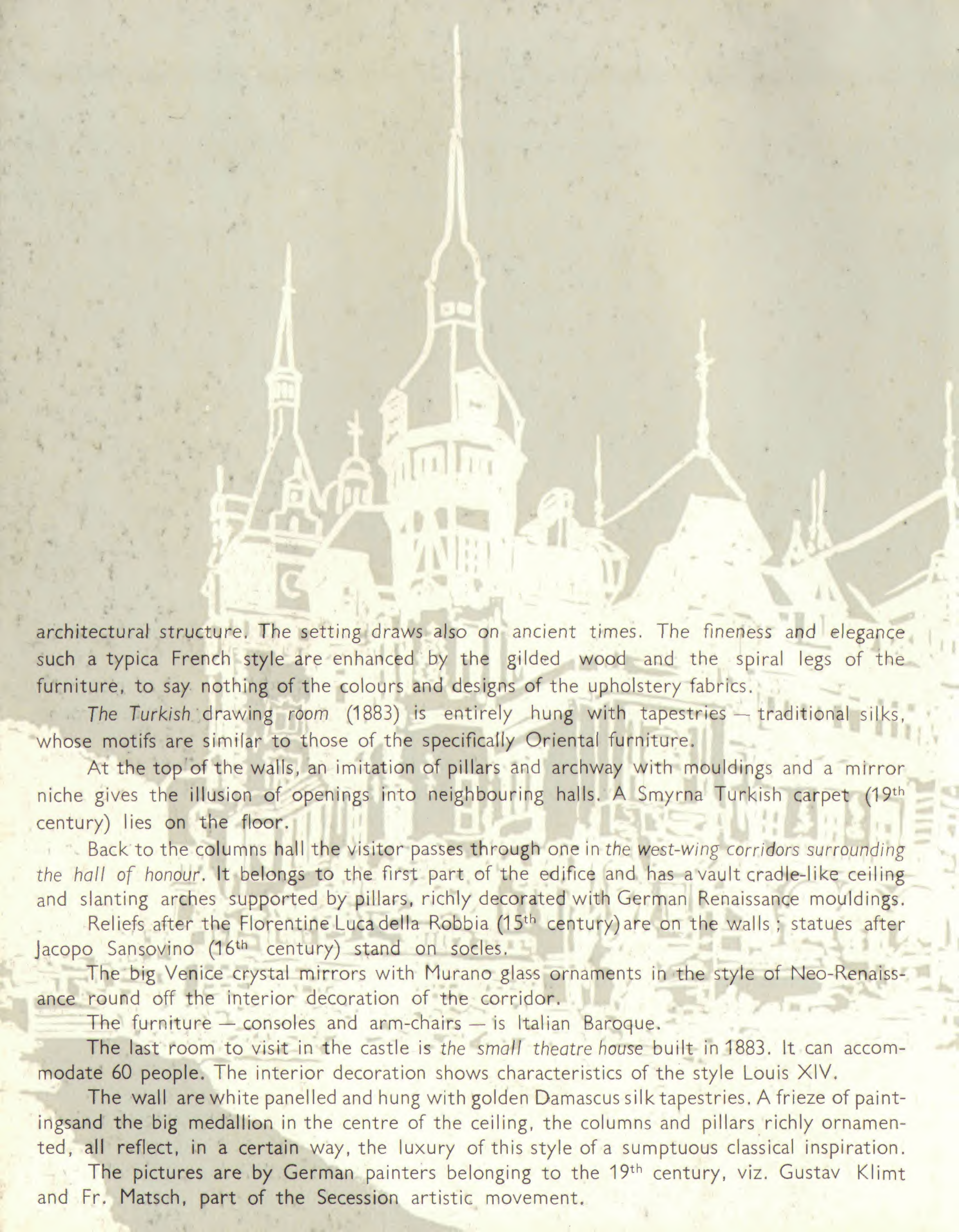
Between the windows there are panoplies of Oriental weapons of the 16th — 19th centuries span and a white marble fountain, a reproduction of an Arabian piece in a mosque in Cairo is against the whole height of the back wall.

A goodly part of the furniture with inlaid ivory and mother-of-pearl is Arabian. From among the big carpets in the hall one is Persian-style from Isparta (Asia Minor) and another is from Saruk (Persia) from the 19th century.

The columns hall also communicates with the French and Turkish drawing rooms.

The French drawing room (1883) is a small passage room in the form of a quarter of a circle, with applied, gilded interior decorations in the Empire style of early 19th century.

The furniture suite — arm-chairs and chairs, style Louis XVI, with Aubusson upholstery — is most original. It has straight lines, perfect proportions and symmetry, a simple and clear



architectural structure. The setting draws also on ancient times. The fineness and elegance such a typical French style are enhanced by the gilded wood and the spiral legs of the furniture, to say nothing of the colours and designs of the upholstery fabrics.

The Turkish drawing room (1883) is entirely hung with tapestries — traditional silks, whose motifs are similar to those of the specifically Oriental furniture.

At the top of the walls, an imitation of pillars and archway with mouldings and a mirror niche gives the illusion of openings into neighbouring halls. A Smyrna Turkish carpet (19th century) lies on the floor.

Back to the columns hall the visitor passes through one in the west-wing corridors surrounding the hall of honour. It belongs to the first part of the edifice and has a vault cradle-like ceiling and slanting arches supported by pillars, richly decorated with German Renaissance mouldings.

Reliefs after the Florentine Luca della Robbia (15th century) are on the walls; statues after Jacopo Sansovino (16th century) stand on socles.

The big Venice crystal mirrors with Murano glass ornaments in the style of Neo-Renaissance round off the interior decoration of the corridor.

The furniture — consoles and arm-chairs — is Italian Baroque.

The last room to visit in the castle is the small theatre house built in 1883. It can accommodate 60 people. The interior decoration shows characteristics of the style Louis XIV.

The walls are white panelled and hung with golden Damascus silk tapestries. A frieze of paintings and the big medallion in the centre of the ceiling, the columns and pillars richly ornamented, all reflect, in a certain way, the luxury of this style of a sumptuous classical inspiration.

The pictures are by German painters belonging to the 19th century, viz. Gustav Klimt and Fr. Matsch, part of the Secession artistic movement.

REPRODUCTIONS



THE PELEŞ CASTLE









GENERAL VIEW OF THE PELEŞ MUSEUM

◀ THE UPPER TERRACE OF THE FRONT



THE SOUTHERN TERRACES OF THE CASTLE

TERRACES ON SEVERAL LEVELS IN THE SOUTH — EAST CORNER OF THE CASTLE





THE TERRACE
WITH ANCIENT
BUSTS IN THE
EAST WING OF
THE CASTLE





THE INNER COURT OF THE CASTLE

WROUGHT IRON GATE OF THE SOUTHERN TERRACE ►





GENERAL VIEW OF
THE HALL OF HO-
NOUR

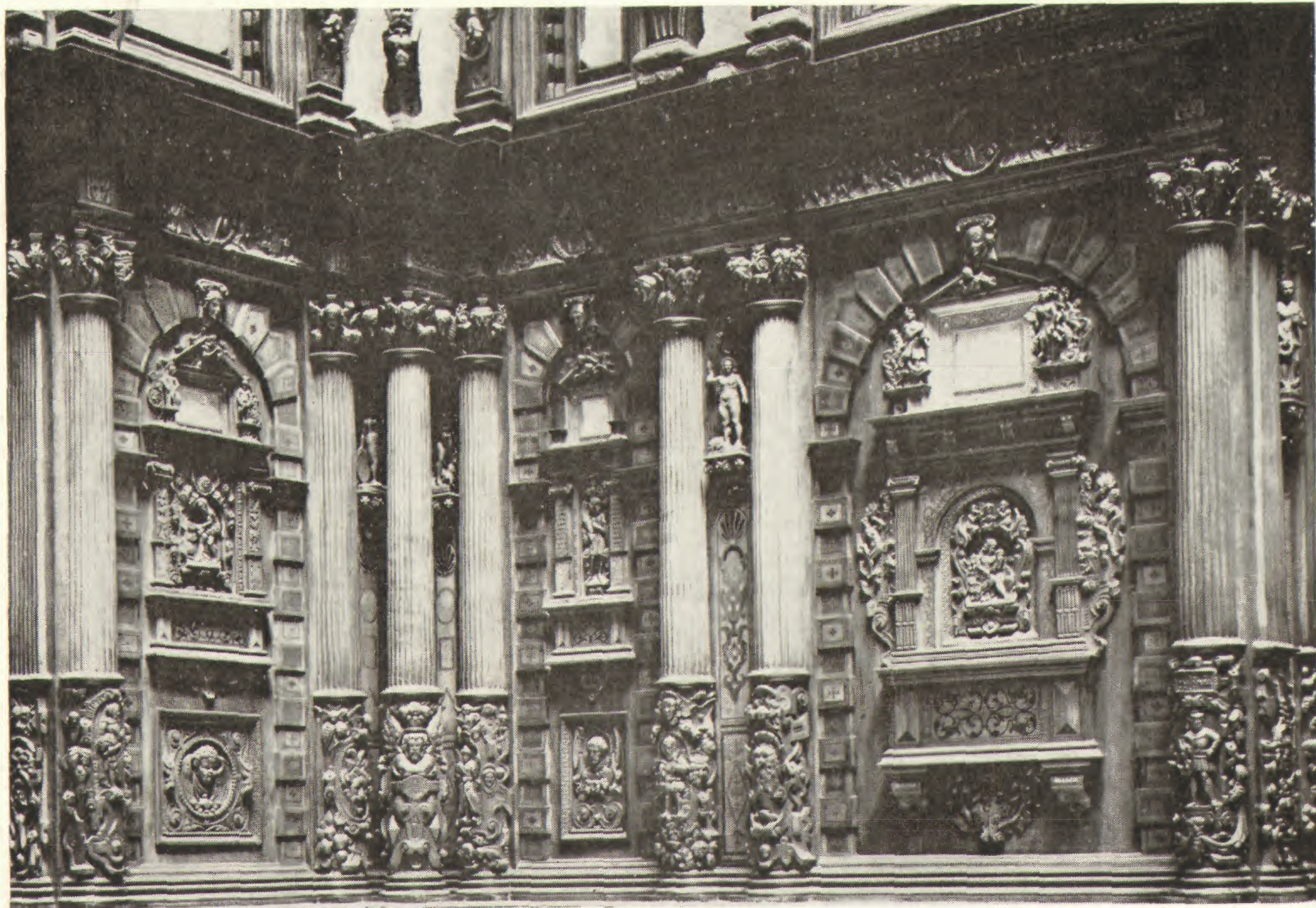




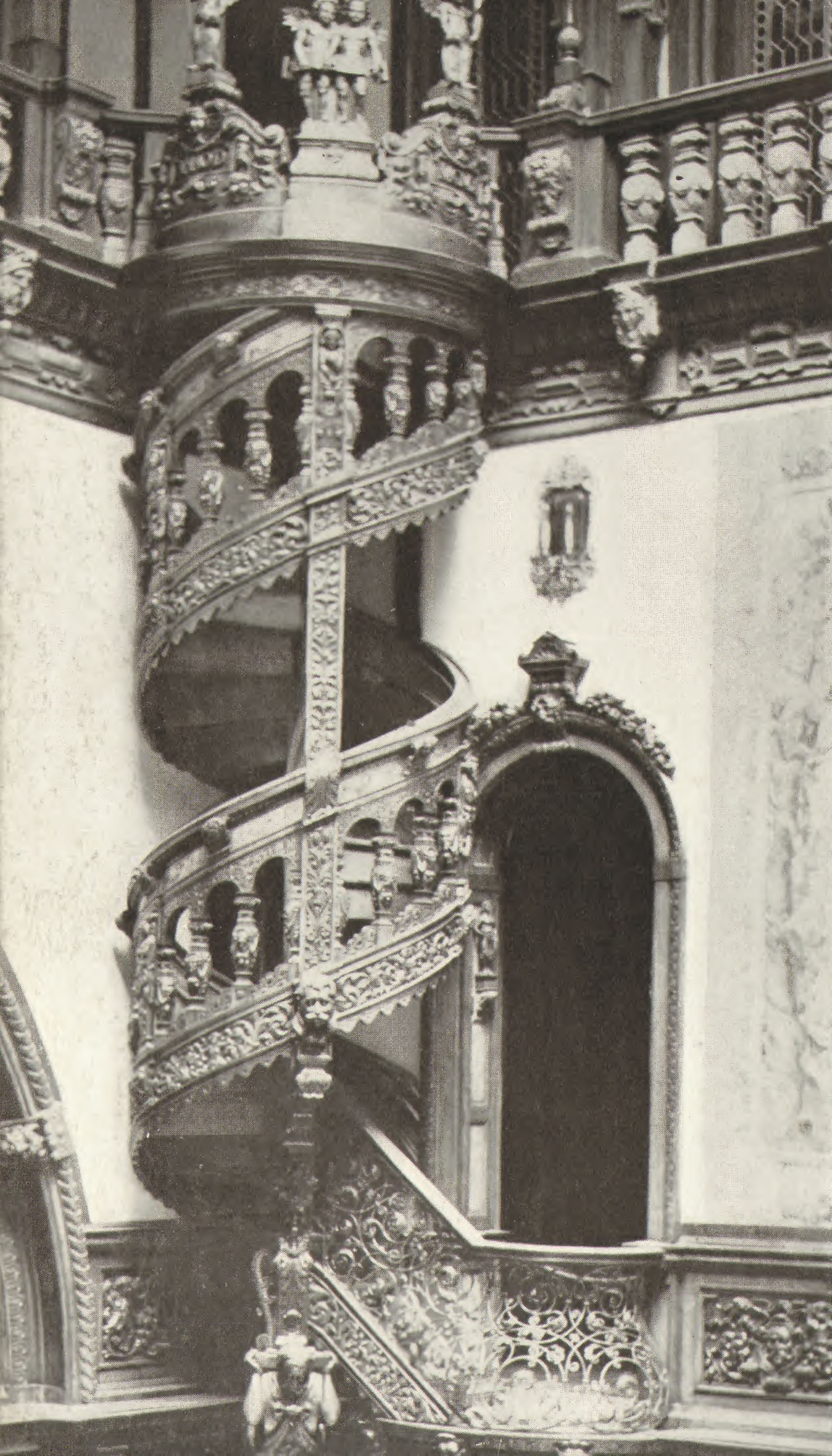
THE HALL OF HONOUR WITH WALNUT PANELS IN
THE NORTH-EAST CORNER

CENTRAL DETAIL OF THE JOINER'S WORK ►

JOINER'S WORK IN THE HALL OF HONOUR ▼



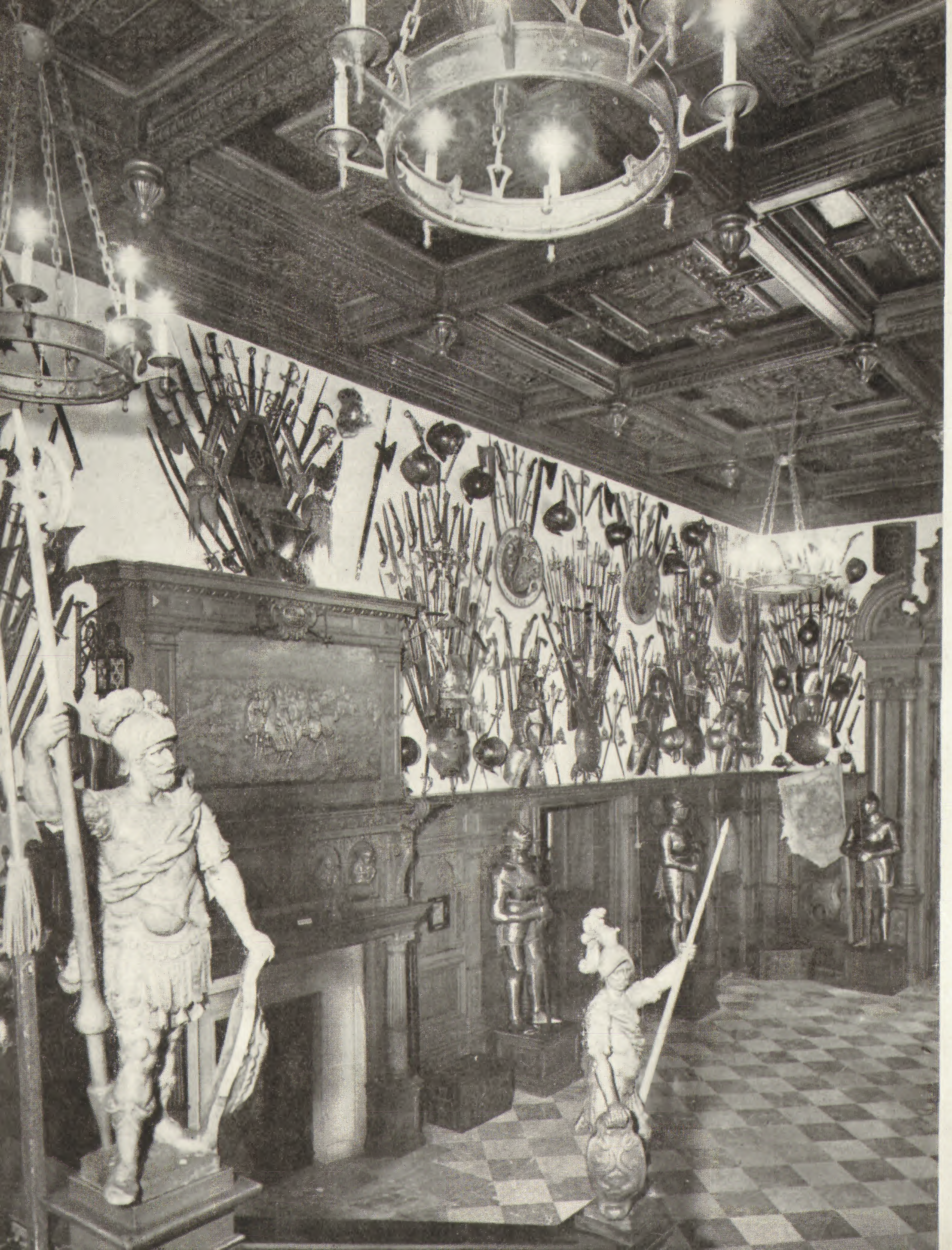




THE WINDING
STAIRS IN THE
HALL OF HONOUR

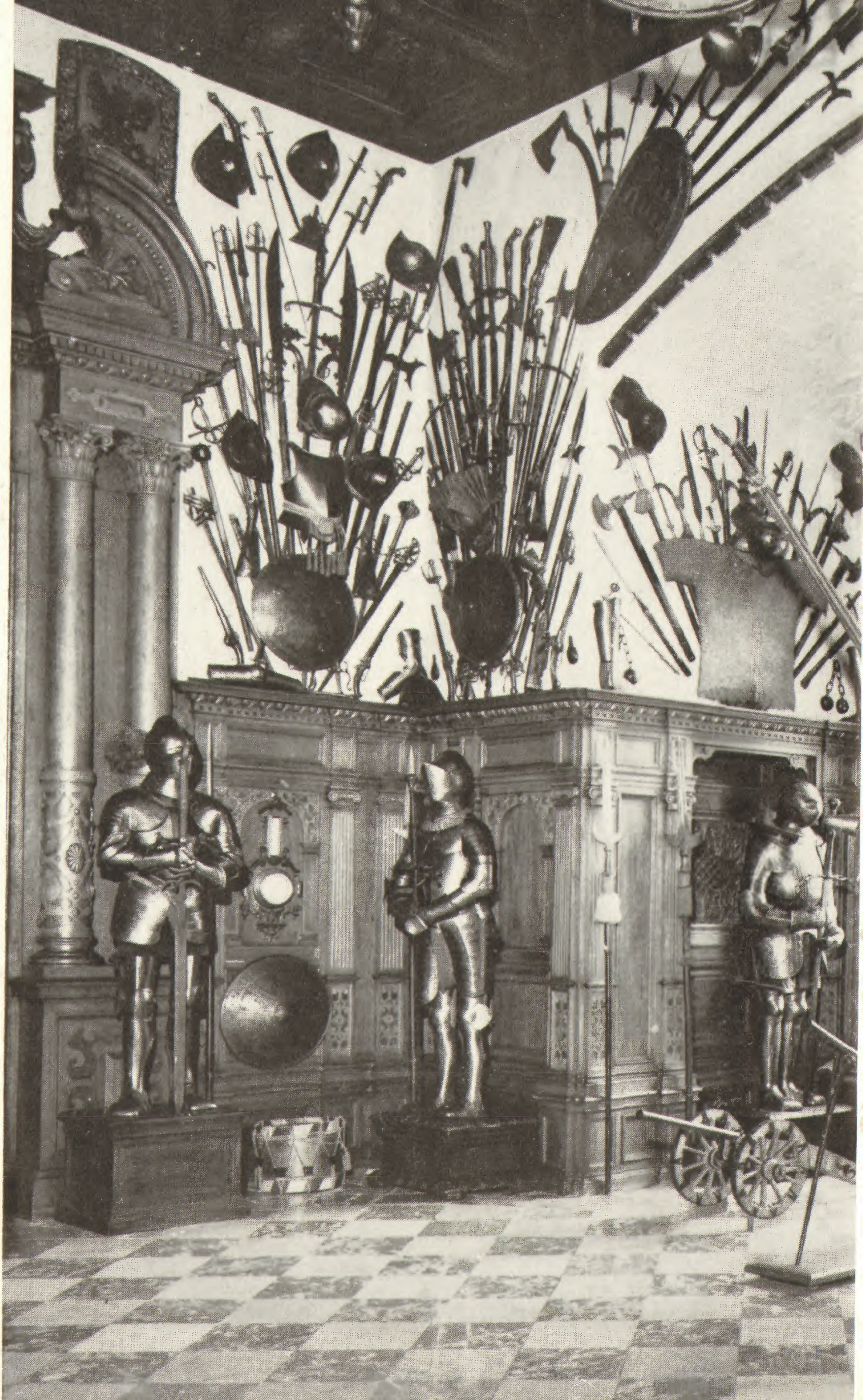
ARCHWAY TO THE
STAIRCASE IN THE
HALL OF HONOUR







◀ THE HALL OF ARMS
ENGRAVED GERMAN ARMOUR WITH THE ARMS OF
NÜRNBERG (1573)



THE BIG HALL OF
ARMS: GERMAN
MAXIMILIAN ARMOUR
16th C)

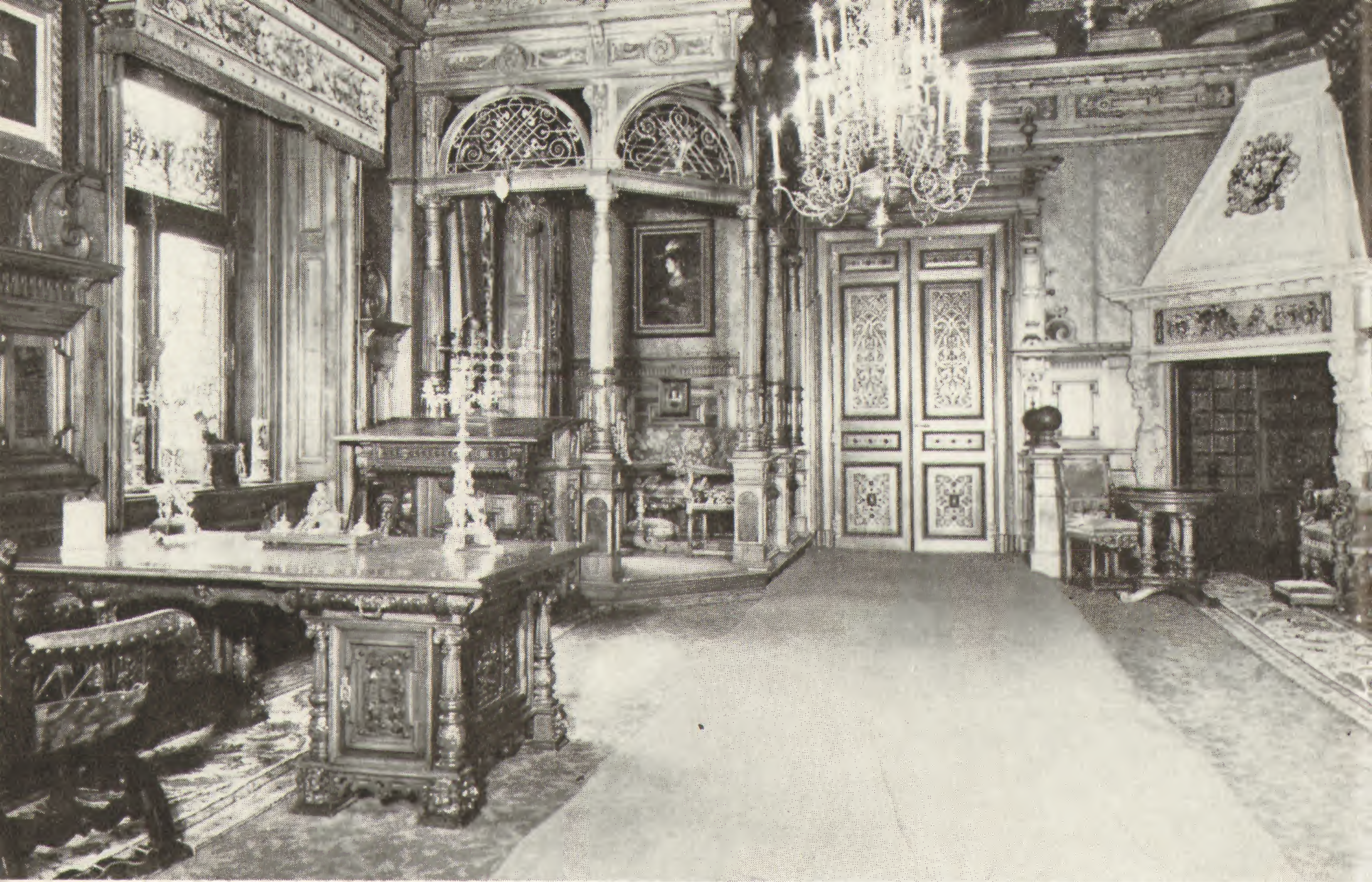




◀ DETAIL OF THE BACK OF THE BRETON BENCH (18th C.) IN THE
ANTECHAMBER OF THE STUDY ROOM

ANTECHAMBER OF THE STUDY ROOM ▼





THE STUDY ROOM





THE COUNCIL ROOM

STAINED GLASS WINDOW IN THE COUNCIL ROOM: "THE OATH TAKEN BY THE THREE SWISS" (1605) BY FRANZ FALLENTER (1586—1611) ►

Ich den vrsprung durch Gottes
Ehre immer loblicher Eddignochheit
Wie die welt zu hall Stenmacher gutt
Arnoldt in melchthal schwerer thut
ein ende zu der vns in dem hee
Ren Landt mit zu bilden mehr
behalten im Landt dritthundert Jar
und vierzehen die Dri zuwar



Geroni
der der
schreiber



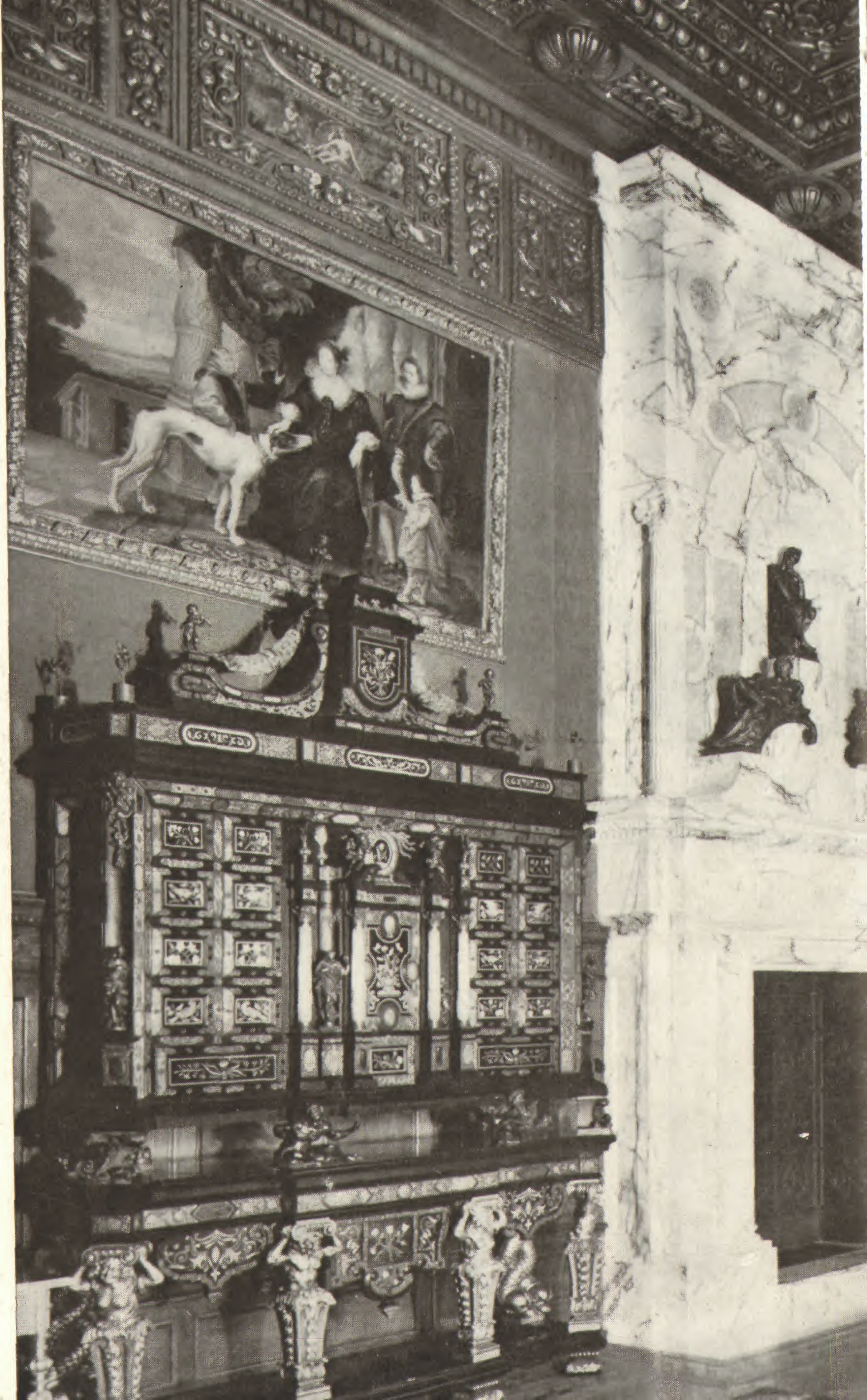
mus Bitt
Sitt Landt
du drit

INDIAN TEAK TABLE (19th C.) IN THE OLD MUSIC ROOM





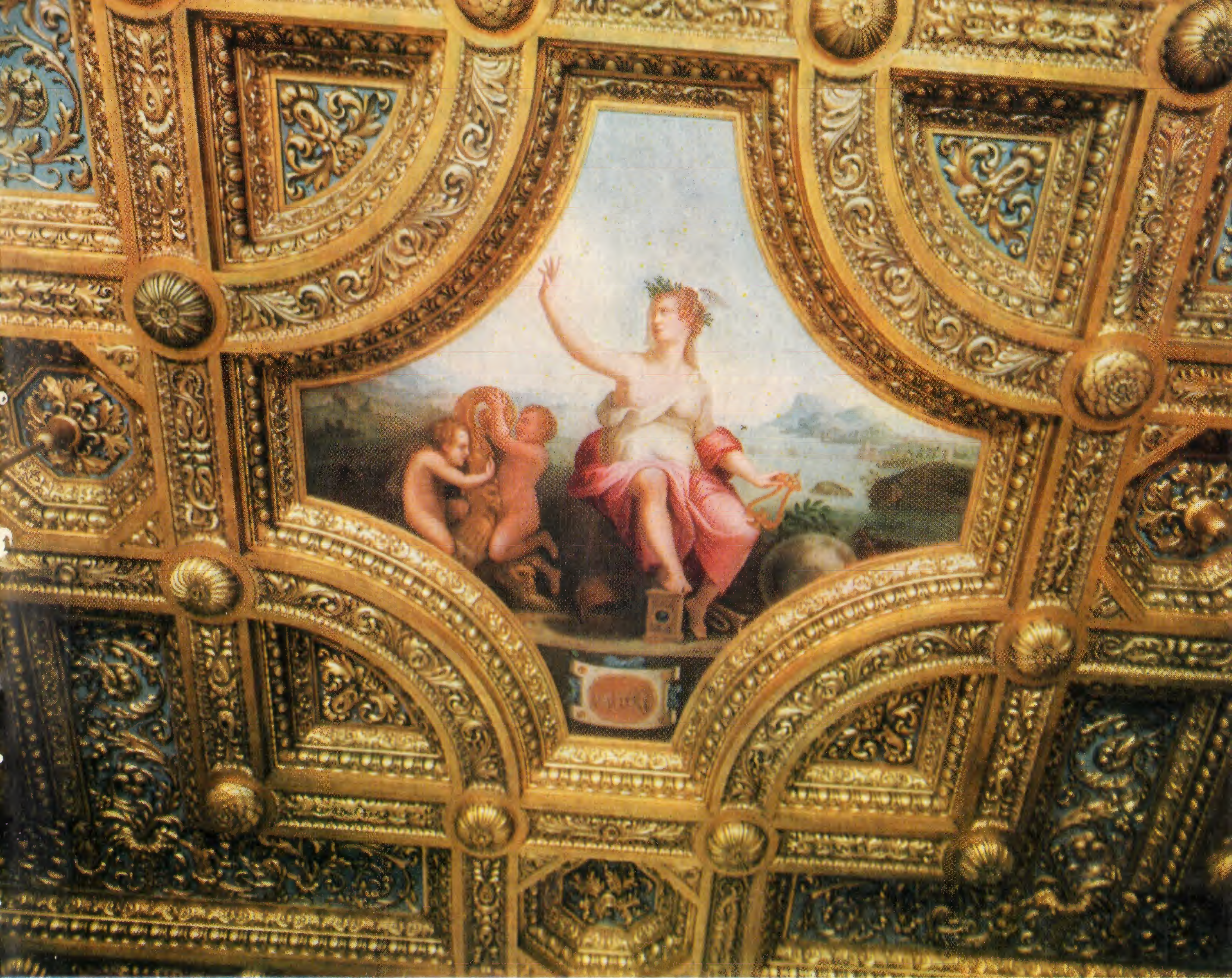
THE OLD MUSIC ROOM



THE FLORENTINE HALL







THE FLORENTINE HALL. DETAIL OF THE CEILING

◀ DETAIL OF A PANEL FROM ONE OF THE CAST BRONZE DOORS FROM THE FLORENTINE HALL

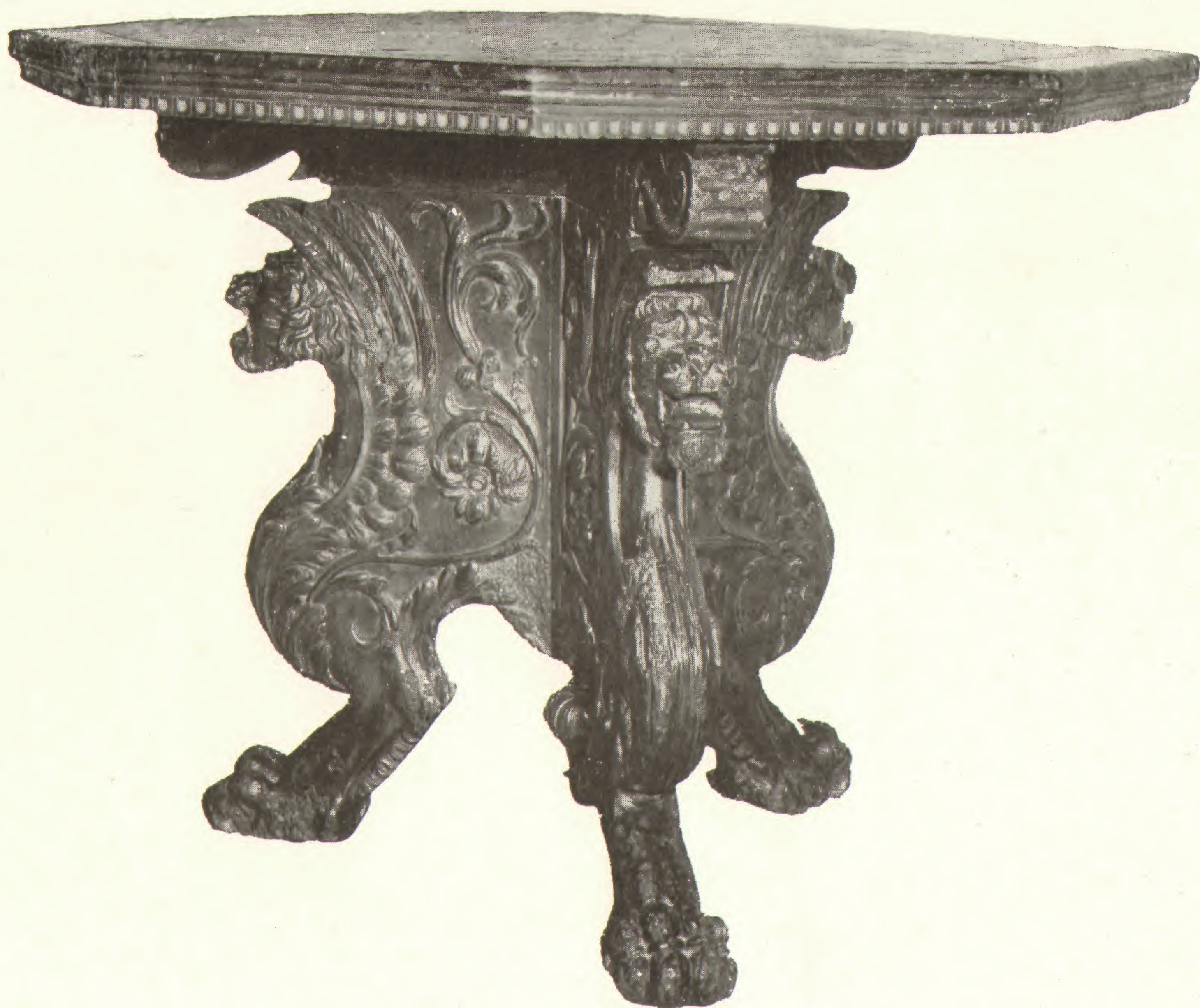


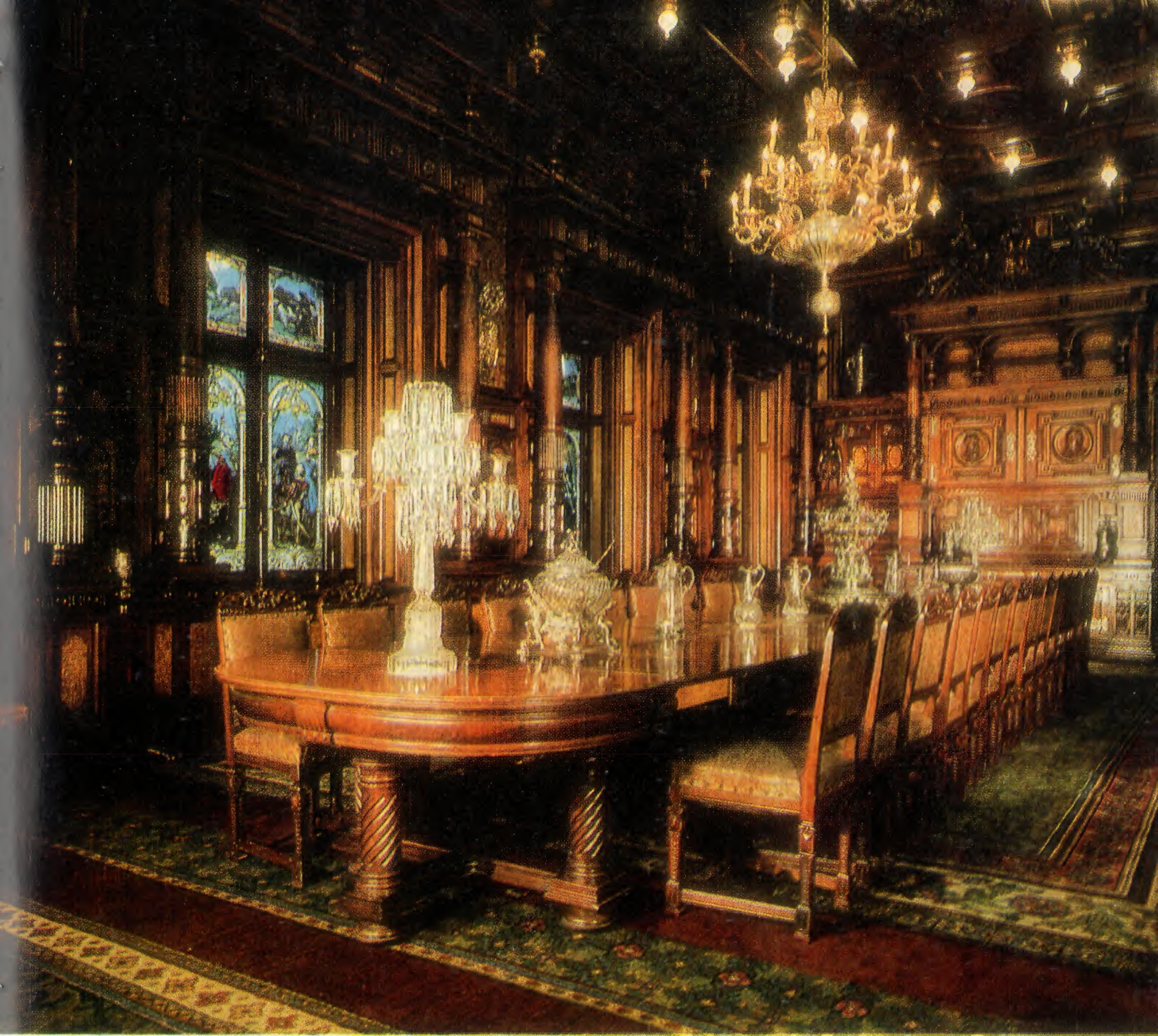
THE COLUMNS HALL. DETAIL OF AN ITALIAN OAK CASE (18th C.)

THE COLUMNS—OR MIRRORS HALL ►

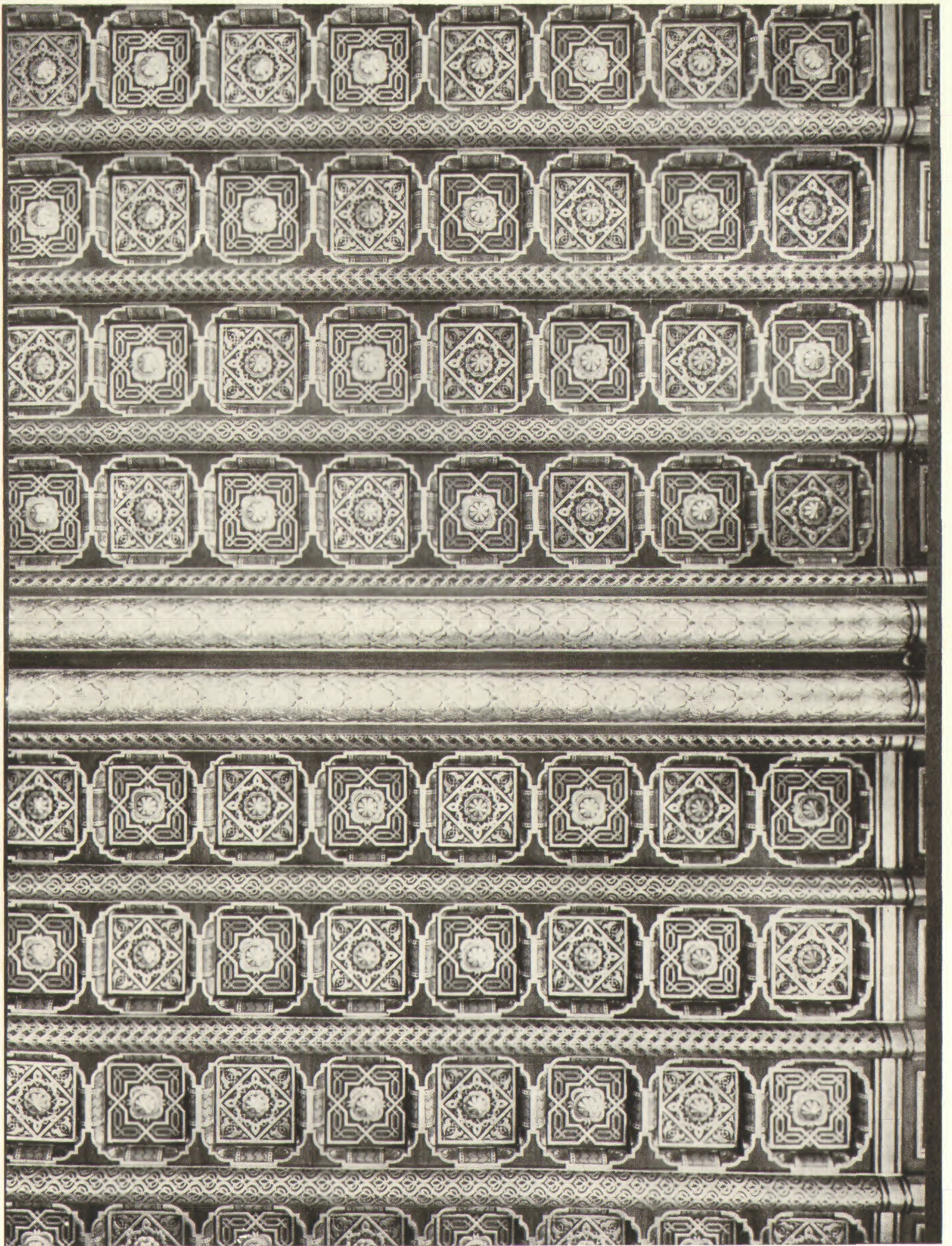


ITALIAN WALNUT TABLE (16th C.) IN THE COLUMNS HALL





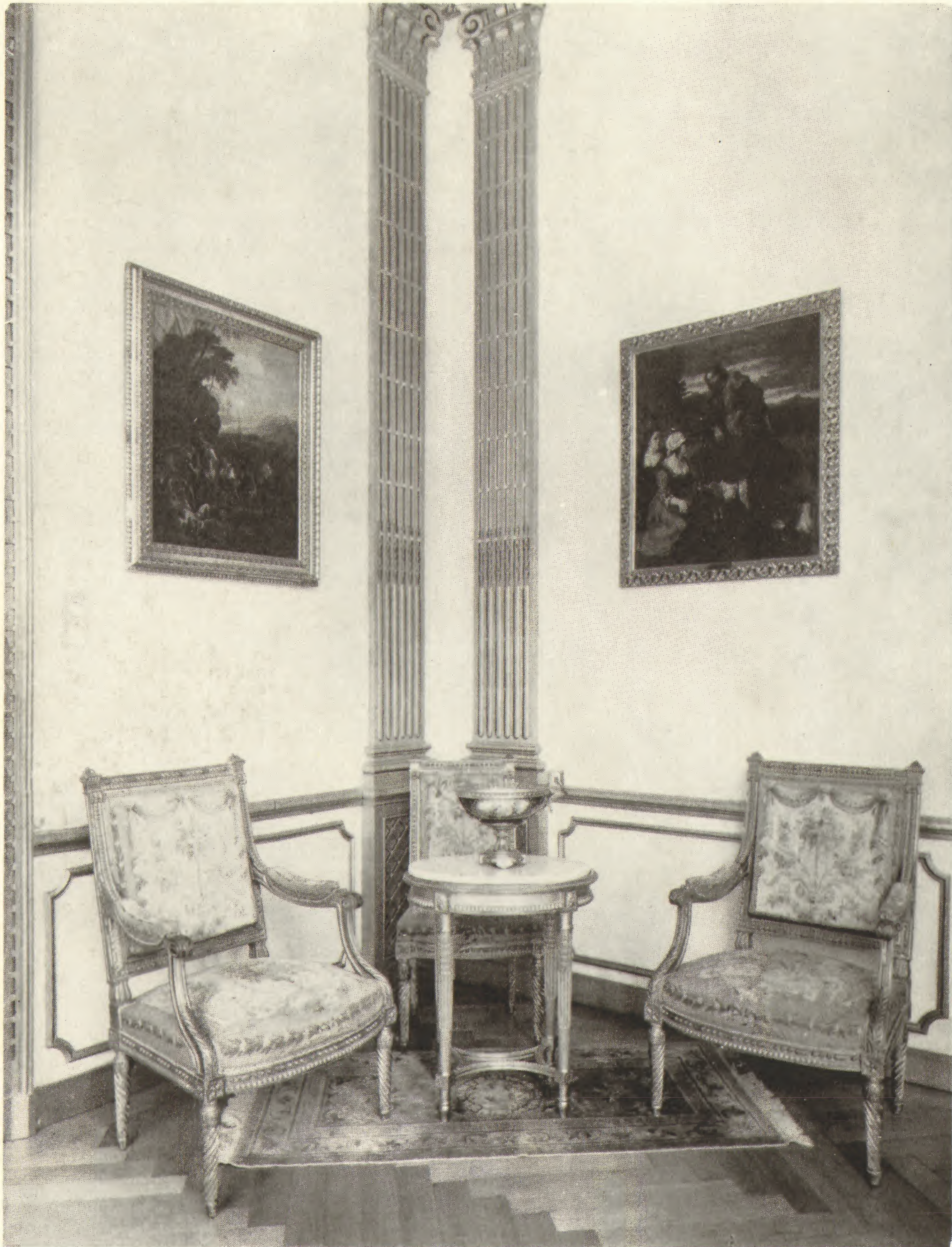
THE DINING ROOM OF THE CASTLE



DETAIL OF THE CEILING IN THE MORESQUE HALL

THE MORESQUE HALL ►



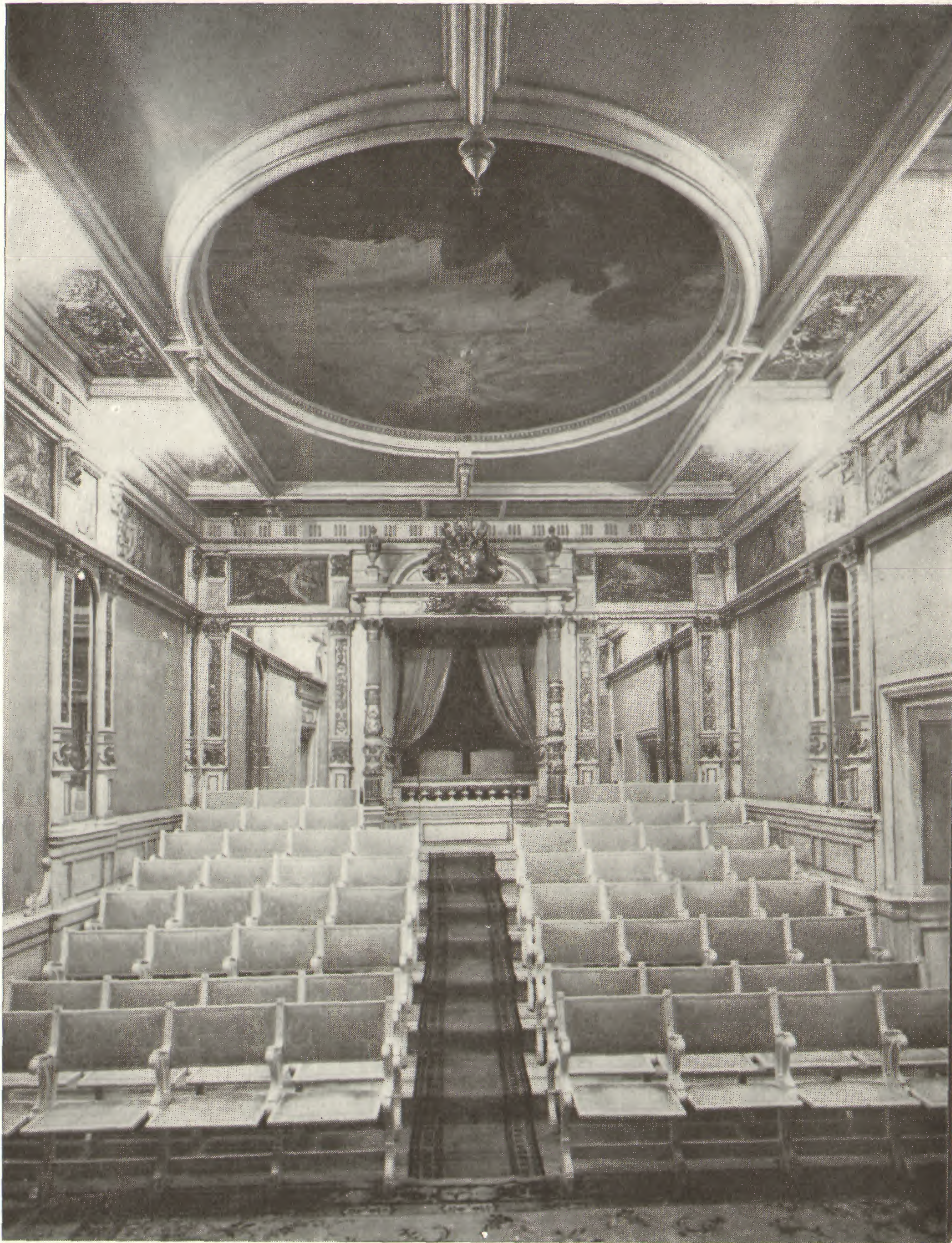


LOUIS XVI SUITE IN THE FRENCH DRAWING ROOM

THE TURKISH DRAWING ROOM ►







THE THEATRE

◀ THE WESTERN CORRIDOR OF THE HALL OF HONOUR

THE NORTHERN CORRIDOR OF THE HALL OF HONOUR ►
STATION BENCH (16th c.) IN THE SAME CORRIDOR











THE DECORATIVE ART SECTION

A separate section of the Peleş Museum organized in 1966, shows the visitor a selection of approximately 600 objects of European decorative arts collection from the 19th and 20th centuries, displayed in five halls in an annex building of the castle, in its immediate vicinity.

They are grouped according to techniques and by countries and manufactures and include: faïences, porcelains, artistic glassware, silverware. These are objects of high quality and great variety and beauty illustrating especially the trends of revival of old prestige productions of European decorative arts.

The first hall exhibits faïences of Spanish manufacture from Salamanca, Valencia, Talvera; of Italian manufacture (16th — 18th centuries) from Faenza, Deruta, Urbino, Pesaro, Cafaggiolo, Savona, Nove, Florence; of French manufacture from Moustiers, Rouen, Marseille (18th century); of Dutch manufacture from Delft (17th century) as well as of German, British and Hungarian make, from among which an albarello of Urbino, two of Faenza and Savona, French pottery and Wedgwood pottery, too.

The second and third halls display German Meissen porcelains from the 18th century either with a pictorial background characteristic of an older period or with relief ornaments, or figurines specific to the following period; and porcelains from Nymphenburg, Dresda, Volkstedt, Ilmenau. The third hall shows old porcelains from Wien, Boemia, Sèvres, Paris, Petersburg, Moscow, Capodimonte; British and Danish porcelains (18th, 19th and 20th centuries). The most important pieces are the Meissen statuettes, the Ilmenau urn, the Sèvres pieces of a set belonging to Prince Alexandru Cuza, the biscuit figurine of Sèvres, the Capodimonte statuettes.

The third room has also on show Murano vases (mainly 16th century), engraved glass vases from Boemia and Petersburg, British crystal, and last but not least French "new art" pieces by Em. Gallé, R. Lalique, E. Rousseau, A. Walter, Jean Sala. A small neighbouring hall displays German stained glass windows (16th century) and Bavarian enamelled glass vases (17th century).

The last hall of gold and silver plates — a goodly part silverware — shows mainly (two thirds) German late Renaissance pieces especially baroque, part of which are combined with materials such as coconuts, ostrich eggs, mother-of-pearl shells, shells set in gems, as well as pieces of Italian, English, French and Russian make.

Noteworthy among them are a Rococo silver jug from Moscow (1762), a wine sampling dish from Dublin (early 19th century), a London tray with the arms of the United Principauties dating from 1860, two pieces by Karl Faberje (Petersburg, 19th c.), etc.

The new section is to be supplemented with other exhibits and genres of decorative arts. Worth mentioning are its coverage and skilful display.



DECORATIVE PLATE (16th C.). ITALIAN POTTERY, DERUTA TYPE (19th CENTURY)



STATUETTE OF A NOBLE LADY, ROCOCO STYLE, MEISSEN CHINAWARE (19th C.)

DECORATIVE VASE WITH LID (16th CENTURY STYLE). MURANO GLASS (19th C.) ►





JUG WITH LID, ROCOCO STYLE. GOLD PLATED SILVER, MOSCOW 1762

TEXT BY:

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